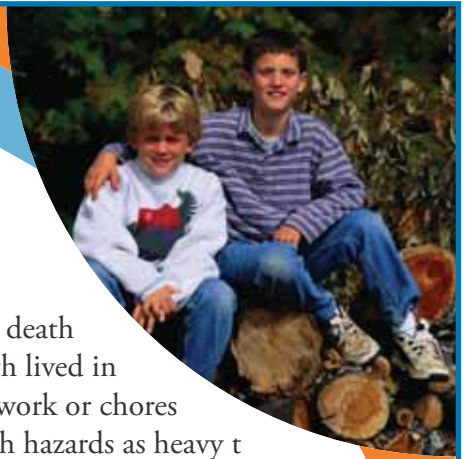




Rural Safety



Key Facts

Children living in rural areas are at greater risk of unintentional injury-related death than children living in urban areas. It is estimated that nearly 1.1 million youth lived in farming households during 2001 and more than half of the youth performed work or chores on the farm. The environment on a farm allows children to be exposed to such hazards as heavy tractors, harmful chemicals, complex machinery, pesticides, and large animals.

Childhood Agricultural Injuries and Deaths

- Each year, it is estimated that 70 children ages 14 and under die from injuries occurring on a farm.
- Children account for almost 20 percent of all agricultural injury fatalities and hospitalizations.
- In 2001 there were an estimated total of 22,648 agricultural injuries to youth under the age of 20; and 63 percent of the injuries occurred when the child was not actively working.

Where

- Nearly two-thirds (16,851) of the youth who experienced an agricultural injury are those who lived on a farm.
- In 2001, nearly 50 percent of all childhood injuries occurred in the Midwest while 31 percent occurred in Southern regions.

Who

- Approximately 6,138 farm-related injuries occur among children under 10 years of age. For children ages 6 and under, falls, large animals and tractors are the primary cause for their injuries on the farm.
- In 2001, male children under 15 years of age accounted for 80 percent of farm-related fatalities and nearly three-fourths of nonfatal farm-related injuries.
- Male children under 14 years of age are more likely than females of the same age to suffer injuries or death as a motor vehicle occupant in the bed of a pickup truck, or riding on ATVs and snowmobiles.
- Older children, ages 6 to 12, are more likely to sustain injuries from farm equipment due to attempting farm tasks that are not age-appropriate.

How

- Nearly two-thirds of childhood agricultural deaths involve head injuries and nearly two-thirds of nonfatal injuries resulted in broken bones and fractures.
- Between 1995 and 2000, the majority of childhood farm-related deaths were due to machinery (25 percent), motor vehicles (17 percent) or drowning (16 percent).
- In 2005, nearly 750 children ages 14 and under were treated for snowmobile-related injuries.
- In 2005, nearly 16,000 children ages 14 and under were treated in emergency rooms for equestrian-related injuries.
- Fire death rates in the most rural communities (population under 2,500) are roughly double the national rate.

Costs

- The direct and indirect economic costs attributable to farm injuries are extensive; it has been estimated the costs of agricultural occupational injuries in the United States in 1992 to be \$4.57 billion annually, for all age groups combined.

Prevention Strategies

- Keeping children ages 15 and under from riding on or driving ATVs, snowmobiles or tractors can prevent the child from being severely harmed or even killed.
- Eliminating extra riders on tractors, mowers, or minibikes is a safety measure that could reduce childhood unintentional injury or death.

Laws and Regulations

- Thirty states and the District of Columbia have restrictions on passengers riding in pickup truck beds, but many of these laws contain huge gaps in coverage and do not provide comprehensive protection for young children.
- Only about 5 percent of farms in the United States are covered by safety regulations specified in the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA). Youths of any age may legally work at any time in any job on a farm owned or operated by their parents.
- In 1988, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) banned the manufacture of three-wheeled ATVs, required warning labels to be placed on ATVs and issued engine-size regulations for ATVs designed for use by children under the age of 16.